

Notifications of Meningococcal Disease

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Meningococcal disease is most common in children under five years, although people of any age can be affected
- The rate of meningococcal disease in 2013 (1.5/100,000) is the lowest rate since 1997.
- In New Zealand, from 2008 to 2013, the highest rate of meningococcal disease was among those aged less than one year.

Meningococcal Disease causes Meningitis
Don't wait – take action
Even if you think the person has been immunised.

Source: Ministry of Health, 2013

Meningococcal disease is most common in children under five years

Meningococcal disease can affect anyone, but it is more common in children under age five, teenagers, and young adults. Factors such as living in overcrowded housing can increase the risk of developing meningococcal diseases (Ministry of Health, 2011).

Meningococcal bacteria are difficult to catch as they don't live for very long outside of the body. They pass from one person to another through secretions from the nose or throat, for example by coughing, sneezing or kissing, but it usually needs to be close, prolonged contact (Ministry of Health, 2014).

People need to be alert to the signs of meningococcal disease because it can come on very quickly. Meningococcal disease can be difficult to diagnose because it can look like other illnesses. Meningococcal disease can be treated with antibiotics but early treatment is essential (Ministry of Health, 2014).

The notification of Meningococcal disease in New Zealand has dropped to 68 cases in 2013.

The notification of meningococcal disease in New Zealand has declined by 20% from 85 cases in 2012 to 68 cases in 2013 (Table 1).

Table 1: Number of meningococcal disease notifications in

Age group	2012	2013	Change %
<1 year	12	11	-8 ↓
1-4 years	14	13	-7 ↓
5-9 years	4	4	0
10-14 years	6	5	-17 ↓
15-19 years	15	12	-20 ↓
20+ year	34	23	-32 ↓
Total	85	68	-20 ↓

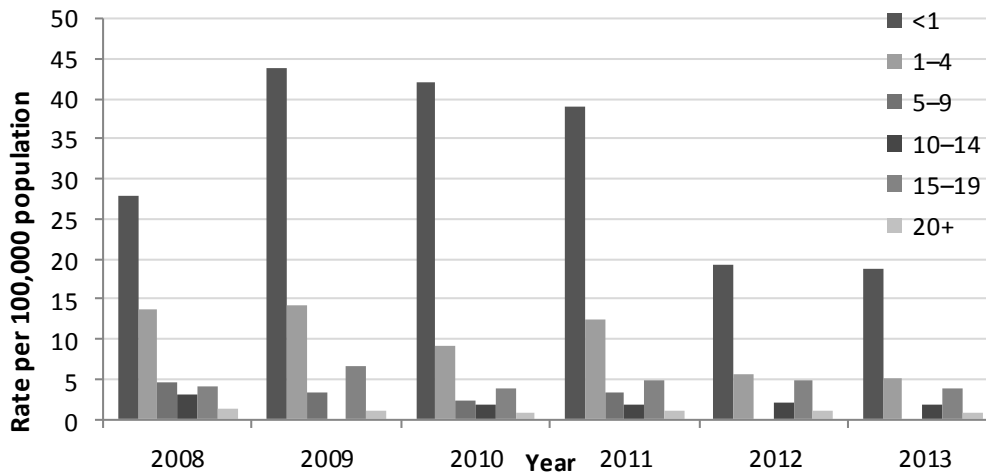
Source: ESR (2014)

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The rate of meningococcal disease (1.5 per 100,000 population) in 2013 is the lowest since 1997

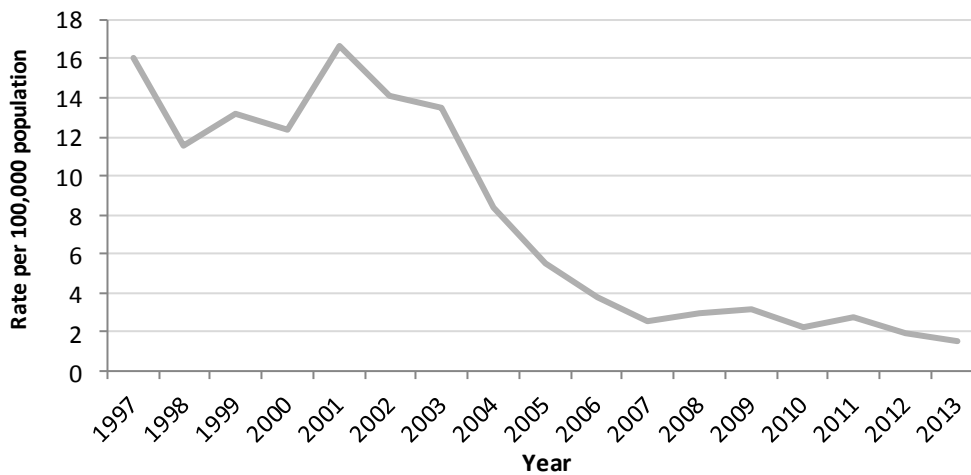
From 2008 to 2013, the highest rate of meningococcal disease in New Zealand was among those aged less than one year, followed by those aged 1-4 years (Figure 1). In the past 17 years, the notification rate of meningococcal disease in New Zealand have fallen from a peak of 16.7 per 100,000 population in 2001 to 1.5 per 100,000 population in 2013 (Figure 2).

Figure 1: Meningococcal disease rates by age group, 2008-2013



Source: ESR (2014)

Figure 2: Notification rate of meningococcal disease, 1997-2013



Source: ESR (2014)

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